

Blues begin again

WYCOMBE Wanderers pre-season training got under way on Tuesday night when new manager John Reardon put the players through their paces at Bisham Abbey. Altogether there were 20 players on view including several new faces.

Secretary John Goldworthy announced this week that the club had taken up the option on several players' contracts including John Maskell, Peter Spittle, Keith Mead, Alan Phillips, Paul Birds, Bob Davies, Mick Holifield, John Priestley, Howard Kennedy, Ian Pearson and Dylan Evans.

Pearson, who was the Blues' leading goalscorer this season, has been training with Millwall this month. He was also invited to go on the Second Division club's tour to Finland but this was cancelled. Ian was expected to play in Wycombe's first friendly against Plymouth Argyle last night (Thursday) at Bisham Abbey. Howard Kennedy, whose torn ligaments at Barking last year kept him out for much of the season, is working hard to reach full fitness.

First opportunity for the fans to see Wanderers in action will be on Saturday, August 6, when they are at home to Bedford in the first of four friendlies. On Tuesday, August 9, they are away to Witney Town while on Saturday, August 13, they stage an attractive game against the full Queens Park Rangers first team, which should include such stars as Stan Bowles and Gerry Francis. Proceeds from the match will go towards full back Dave Clement's testimonial fund.

The final friendly is against an Oxford United XI at Loakes Park on Wednesday, August 17. The Isthmian League gets under way on the 20th and Wanderers can't be too happy with their early programme.

They have away matches at Croydon (August 20) and Hayes (August 23) followed by tough home games against Leatherhead (August 27) and Hendon (August 30).

A new innovation this season will be the Shaw and Kilburn Floodlight League, which Wycombe have joined along with Banbury, Aylesbury, Witney, Milton Keynes, Chesham and Oxford City. A trophy and £100 prize will go to the winners and matches will be played on Tuesdays starting in November.

With the F.A. relaxing their regulations on sponsorship, Wycombe are embarking on another new scheme this season. They are inviting local firms to sponsor league matches at £75 a time. This covers the cost of floodlighting, match ball, officials' expenses, etc. For their £75, firms will have a banner headline on the front of the programme, a feature on the programme, advertising space available on the ground and 20 stand tickets for the match.

THE first of the new sponsors in the Isthmian League was announced this week. They are Radio Luxembourg who will finance the team goalscoring awards in both the Isthmian and Northern Leagues.

In addition, '208' are putting forward £25,000's worth of 'air time' which takes the form of a regular five minute news bulletin on Saturday nights from August 20. News of the two leagues will be broadcast on 208 metres at 9.00 p.m.

In the Isthmian League, Radio Luxembourg will award £208 and a trophy to the club with the most goals in each of the three divisions. These prizes, however, are subject to clubs staying within an eight point limit on the sportsmanship pool where four points are awarded for a dismissal and one for a booking.

Should two teams score the same number of goals in a division, Luxembourg's award will go to the club with the higher league placing. Unlike Rothmans, a club that finishes in the top three will not be exempt from the award.

This is the first news of a sponsor since Rothmans withdrew after three years sponsorship. However, Isthmian League chairman Mr Barry East told the 'Free Press' this week that a special meeting of all the league clubs was being held in London on Monday to announce further details of new sponsors.

Mr East also said that the League Cup would be sponsored to the tune of £1,500 this season the cash going to the clubs who progress furthest in the competition. Those reaching the last 16 will probably start to receive prizes with the winners taking the main award.

Also this season, there is a scheme to run a League Youth Cup for under 18 year olds, which again will carry £1,500 prizemoney. Clubs who do not run youth teams can be represented by minor teams in their area. Wycombe Wanderers are discussing the idea at present. Object of the exercise is to encourage younger players into the Isthmian League.

Blues start

WYCOMBE Wanderers, who have been training for three weeks, stage the first of four pre-season friendlies tomorrow (Saturday) when they take on Southern League Bedford at Loakes Park.

The majority of last season's team is expected to play with the exception of Mick Holifield and Tony Horseman who are on holiday. Several new young players should also be given their first run out.

There is no further news on the future of Ian Pearson, the Blues' top goalscorer last season. Ian has been training with Millwall during the summer but is still contracted to Wycombe. Both Millwall and another club are said to be interested in signing him but no firm offers have yet been made.

On Tuesday evening, Wanderers travel to Witney Town for another friendly.

Anyone wishing to become members of Wycombe Wanderers can apply at the ground tomorrow or by post, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope, to Loakes Park. New club members ties also go on sale tomorrow, priced £2.50.

New secretary

ROGER LEE, who was treasurer of Wycombe Wanderers for eight years before resigning from the post in 1976, has been elected general secretary of Slough Town. There were three other applicants.

Q.P.R. BRING FIRST TEAM

QUEENS Park Rangers, the First Division Club, are bringing down their full first team squad to play Wycombe Wanderers on Saturday, August 13, at Loakes Park. The match is being staged as part of full-back Dave Clement's testimonial fund.

Barring injuries during Rangers' tour to Bruges this weekend, where they play in a four-pronged tournament with Derby County, A.E.K. Athens and Bruges, the London club are expected to field such star players as former England captain Gerry Francis and England players Stan Bowles, Dave Thomas and Ian Gillard.

Two of Rangers' new signings — Dave Needham from Notts County and Brian Williams from Bury — are included in this 15-man squad: Phil Parkes, Dave Clement, Ian Gillard, Dave Webb, Dave Needham, Ron Abbott, Gerry Francis, Don Masson, John Hollins, Dave Thomas, Stan Bowles, Don Givens, Peter Eastoe, Brian Williams and Mick Leach.

A percentage of the gate will go to Dave Clement, who has won five England caps at full-back. Rangers rewarded his loyalty to the club with a testimonial year this season. He has played 409 games for them and was in the side that came up from the Third Division.